CLAIMS

1. A protective structure 1 for an apparatus for the handling of containers comprising a frame 2, panels 9 for insulating it from the external environment, fastened to said frame 2 by fastening means 10 which create a gap between said frame 2 and said panels 9, and gasket means arranged in said gap, characterised in that said gasket means comprise gasket walls 11 which can be expanded by forcing in fluids under pressure.

2. A protective structure according to claim 1 in which said gasket walls 11 in non-operating conditions do not adhere to said panels 9 or said frame 2 and in operating conditions are expanded by a supply of said fluids under pressure until they engage to form a seal with the surfaces of said panels 9 and said frame 2.

3. A protective structure according to claim 1 or 2 in which said gasket walls 11 are tubular and closed at both ends.

4. A protective structure according to claim 3 in which said gasket walls 11 have an ovoid or elliptical shape in cross-section.

5. A protective structure according to any one of the preceding claims in which said gasket walls 11 are of elastic material.

6. A protective structure according to claim 5 in

which said gasket walls 11 are formed from an elastomer resistant to sterilising products.

7. A protective structure according to claim 5 or 6 in which said gasket walls 11 are formed from polyurethane elastomers compatible with food processing applications.

8. A protective structure according to claim 1 in which said gasket walls 11 are in connection with means of supplying fluids under pressure.

9. A protective structure according to claim 8 in which said means of supplying fluids under pressure are compressors for the supply of compressed air.

10. A protective structure according to claim 8 or 9 in which the connection between said gasket walls 11 and said means of supplies of fluids under pressure is made by means of tubes, which are inserted into small holes arranged on the surface of said gasket walls 11.

11. A protective structure according to claims 8 to 10 in which the connection between said gasket walls 11 and said means for supplies of fluids under pressure is in series or in parallel.

12. A protective structure according to claim 1 in which said panels 9 are fastened to said frame 2 in a fixed manner.

13. A protective structure according to claim 1

in which said panels 9 are fastened to said frame 2 in a movable manner.

14. A protective structure according to claim 13 in which said fastening means 10 comprise hingeing means and locking means.

15. A protective structure according to claim 13 in which said fastening means 10 comprise guidance means 10a and sliding means 10b which engage slidably in said guidance means 10a.

16. A gasket device, suitable for creating a sealing and noise barrier between an internal environment and an external environment, comprising a gasket wall which extends along the entire joint surface of two elements spaced apart from each other characterised in that said wall in non-operating conditions does not adhere to said joint surfaces and that in operating conditions, said wall is expanded by being supplied with fluids under pressure until it engages to form a seal with said surfaces of the spaced apart elements.